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Letter dated 3 June 2003 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I have the honour to transmit herewith the report on the international security presence in Kosovo for the period 1 to 30 April 2003 (see annex).

I should be grateful if this letter could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Annex

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Kosovo Force

1. Over the reporting period (1 to 30 April 2003) there were just over 24,800 troops of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in theatre.

2. The overall security situation in Kosovo during the month of April remained generally stable.

Security

3. The self-styled Albanian National Army (AKSh) has made statements taking responsibility for carrying out acts of violence.

4. On 12 April, the railway bridge at Loziste (north-west of Mitrovica) was seriously damaged in an explosion, and human body parts and pieces of an anti-tank mine were found on the spot. The AKSh, in a web site statement, claimed responsibility and reported that two of its members died in the explosion.

5. Subsequently, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Michael Steiner, issued Administrative Directive No. 2003/9 declaring AKSh a terrorist organization. In accordance with that directive, membership or other active participation in AKSh will constitute a crime punishable under the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) Regulation No. 2001/12. On 23 April, UNMIK police arrested a suspect (allegedly a member of the AKSh); they are conducting an investigation into the incident.

6. The first trial against AKSh members began in the Gnjilane District Court on 8 April. The accused — Naser Azemi, Gazmend Zeqiri and Freiz Deliu — are all from the Vitina municipality and have been charged with terrorism, illegal possession of weapons and ammunition, and incitement to hatred.

7. One of the individuals the AKSh claimed was killed by the Loziste explosion was a member of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC). KFOR and UNMIK jointly made clear to Kosovo Protection Corps Commander General Ceku that he must take immediate steps to purge the KPC ranks of any members connected to the AKSh. UNMIK has cancelled all out-of-Kosovo training opportunities for the KPC pending substantial progress in this area.

8. At the beginning of the reporting period, KFOR arrested the former Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK) Commander Maliq Ndrecaj[1] for posing a threat to a safe and secure environment. He was eventually released on 28 April.

9. KFOR forces continued to conduct intelligence-based surveillance operations and patrols throughout the province to stop illegal activities and weapons smuggling, and to minimize the risk of terrorist activity.

[1] Ndrecaj is also known as "Commander Mala". He played an important role in the 2001 insurgency in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name), and was on the "most wanted" list of UNMIK and KFOR for his more recent support of Ethnic Albanian Armed Groups (EAAG) criminal activities.

10. During the period under review, KFOR collected 117 assorted weapons, 121 grenades and mines and 16,446 rounds of ammunition. In one operation conducted in Obilic on 10 April, KFOR confiscated 30 weapons and a significant amount of ammunition.

Border and boundary security

11. KFOR continued to monitor border and boundary security, and reported 14 attempts to cross borders illegally during the reporting period.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

12. The security forces of Serbia and Montenegro continued to remain in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Military Technical Agreement.

13. During April, KPC roll calls were called at short notice and showed a reduction in absenteeism. Only 30 out of 888 persons were absent without permission. The minimum required presence is 75 per cent. (This figure was almost met, with a presence of 74.4 per cent.) The UNMIK Kosovo Force Coordinator is continuing his work to draw up the final version of a terms of service contract.

14. Eighteen cases of non-compliance were reported in April, including 13 cases of absenteeism, with the rest relating to assault, misuse of equipment and insubordination.

15. On 25 April, KFOR and KPC worked together in a rescue operation following a landslide in the village of Lozan in the west of Kosovo. KFOR reported that KPC members worked well with the others involved, and were competent and professional.

Cooperation with international organizations

16. KFOR continues to provide assistance, on request, to international organizations and non-governmental organizations working throughout Kosovo, and to provide security assistance in support of UNMIK police operations.

Outlook

17. The overall security situation in Kosovo continues to improve steadily. Criminal violence remains the main source of concern.